GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS
LOK SABHA

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:2259
ANSWERED ON:07.08.2000
PREVENTION AND CONTROL OF POLLUTION
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Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state:

(a) the details of major activities undertaken by his Ministry and its attached offices in the area of survey and conservation of natural resources and in prevention and control of pollution during last three years; and

(b) the details of the existing laws for prevention and control of pollution, conservation and protection of forestry and wildlife effective for proper implementation?

Answer

MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI BABU LAL MARANDI)

(a) The major activities undertaken in the area of survey and conservation of natural resources and in prevention and control of pollution during last three years include the following:-

- The Botanical Survey of India (BSI) and the Zoological Survey of India (ZSI) carry out the survey and inventorisation of the floral and faunal resources of the country respectively. Approximately 70% of the geographical area of the country has been surveyed so far by these organisations. Based upon these surveys, about 46,000 plant species and 81,000 animal species have been recorded. The survey and inventorisation work is an ongoing process.

- Steps were taken to control pollution from 17 categories of highly polluting industries. Out of a total of 1551 industries identified in 1991, now only 67 units are not having adequate facilities to comply with the standards. These units have been directed by Central Pollution Control Board and State Pollution Control Boards for augmentation of pollution control devices.

- 24 critically polluted areas have been identified and Action Plans have been prepared.

- River basin-wise surveys conducted to identify the polluted stretches and their sources. 14 major rivers are included under River Action Programme.

- Environmental guidelines for siting and operation of industries have been brought out.

- Environmental clearance has been made compulsory for specified categories of developmental projects involving public hearing/NGO participation as an important component of EIA process.

- Environmental audit in the form of environmental statement has been made mandatory for all the polluting industries.

- To promote pollution prevention in small scale industries, 15 waste minimisation circles have been set up in various parts of the country and about 100 such more circles are being established for adoption of clean technology, better work practices and energy conservation techniques.

- Environmental Epidemiological Studies have been initiated in the different parts of the country to find out impact of pollution on human health and suggest mitigative measures.

- For control of pollution from automobiles, stricter emission standards, introduction of unleaded petrol in the entire country, installation of catalytic converters, introduction of low sulfur fuels and improvement in the fuel quality have been undertaken.

- Preparation of Zoning Atlas for siting of industries based on environmental considerations in various districts of the country has been taken up. So far, 19 such districts have been covered.

- A scheme for setting up of Common Effluent Treatment Plants (CETP) in cluster of small scale industrial units has been taken up. About 89 CETP projects have been approved which are at various stages of implementation.

- A Network of Ambient Air (290) and Water (480) Quality Monitoring Stations has been set up throughout the country.

- Effluent and Emission Standards have been notified under the Environment (Protection) Act for about 80 categories of industries. Besides, standards for ambient air and water quality have also been notified.

- For reduction of vehicular pollution, emission standards and fuel quality standards have been notified. The manufacturers are now required to mention in their advertisements that their vehicles meet the prescribed emission norms as per the notification issued by Ministry of Environment & Forests.

- Power plants (coal based) located beyond 1000 kms. From the pit-head are required to use low ash content coal (not exceeding 34%) w.e.f. 1.6.2001. Power plants located in the sensitive areas are also required to use low ash coal irrespective of their distance from the pit-head.

- A Status Paper on pollution in Delhi with an Action Plan for its control has been prepared and the same is being implemented.The respective State Govts. Of Maharashtra, Tamil Nadu & West Bengal had been advised to prepare Action Plans for Mumbai, Chennai & Calcutta respectively. Out of the three, Mumbai Action Plan has been evolved discussed with the concerned authorities at the Central and State level and has been finalised.

- Six Environment Authorities have been constituted under the EPA, including the National Environment Appellate Authority.

- Taj Protection Mission:- A scheme for protection of Taj Mahal from pollution has been undertaken on the directions of the Hon`ble Supreme Court at a total cost of Rs. 600.00 crores.

(b) The existing laws for prevention and control of pollution, conservation and protection of forestry and wildlife include the following:-

- The Indian Forest Act, 1927.

- The Wildlife Protection Act, 1972.

- The Water (Prevention & Control of Pollution) Act, 1974 as amended in 1998.

- The Water (Prevention & Control of Pollution) Cess Act, 1977.

- The Forests (Conservation) Act, 1980.

- The Air (Prevention & Control of Pollution) Act, 1981 as amended in 1987.

- The Environment (Protection) Act, 1986.

- The Public Liability Insurance Act, 1991.